

BNP Paribas Open

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Taylor Fritz

Press Conference



T. FRITZ/S. Baez

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THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Super confident on these courts, having won here a couple years ago, or does last year color that? Quarters is a good performance. But how do you feel here versus how you feel in other locations?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I don't know. I come here and I feel very at home. Obviously I think a lot of that is the fact I have been playing on these courts for such a long time, even when I was a kid I was playing on these courts. So it just feels very familiar. Yeah, having that confidence of knowing that I've played well here in the past helps me come back, I guess, and have that confidence that I can do it again.

Q. Can you talk about facing Holger Rune next? Meeting with him last year in Miami. What do you make of his game and the challenge of facing him?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I think it will be interesting. Last year in Miami the court was really fast, so I was able to rush him a good amount. I also just felt like, it seemed like maybe he almost, like, overstrategized because he was doing things that I felt weren't really part of his game, like trying to slice a ton. He was just kind of not playing how, like, he normally plays.

I'm not going to, I guess, think too much about that match. The conditions are a lot different, and he also is definitely improved from then.

But what I have to do stays the same pretty much whoever I play. I need to serve well, I need to be aggressive, and take my chances when I get them.

Q. Do you think you're improved since then, as well?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think the level of tennis that I just, like, show up and play is better. I think I'm serving better right now than I was this time last year, for sure. I think that's

not even close.

But I don't know. From the ground I'd say it's pretty similar. I'd say there are some matches last year I played that were really high level. I don't know. The consistent level is probably better.

Q. How much better of a mover would you say you are from maybe two or three years ago, and how big has the role of Wolfgang and Michael Russell been?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I think from three years ago it's a good bit. I think from maybe, like, last year or two I feel like I've just been moving a lot better. I don't know if it's gotten any better from then. But I think, I mean, part of it is obviously just keeping me healthy, you know. Wolf, we spend a lot of time. I'd be surprised if there was any players that spent more time, I guess, working on their -- just on the table, like, working on the body than I do.

And then Mike just working me really hard. So then, you know, Wolf does his job so then I guess Mike can do his job. If I was just getting worked by Mike all the time I'd probably just be injured all the time, too.

You know, them both doing their jobs is huge. I can train and I can be moving a lot and be getting fitter and faster, but I can do it all without my body getting destroyed.

Q. I've heard several players here talk about the balls getting bigger quickly because of the conditions of the balls. I'm sort of used to hearing that when it's humid out. It's not very humid here. What does it actually mean, "the balls are getting bigger"? Because I think of smacking balls and air going out of them and I would think they would get smaller. What does it feel like and what are you trying to convey by that expression?

TAYLOR FRITZ: It's just the fuzz on the balls gets roughed up, so obviously when it's new it's patted down on the ball, so the ball is smaller, flies through the air faster, more feel on your racquet because you're kind of just making contact with the ball.



And now once the fuzz gets roughed up, then it gets, like, puffed out a lot, so the ball gets bigger. It also gets a lot slower, gets harder to feel the ball because you're not making contact with just, like, the ball. It's just a lot of fuzz is puffed out. So it just makes it a lot slower.

I don't think it's any different this year than it's been in the past. Kind of always been like that. But for sure when it's humid in some places, the balls get massive, and then it gets impossible to hit a winner. It's really bad, I think.

I think it should probably be looked into, a ball change, like, every seven, or we should probably ball-change more I think. I think when you're playing humid conditions and you play a set where you have a tiebreaker, because they'll count a tiebreaker as only one game when obviously a tiebreaker has two to three points as a game -- sorry, there's two to three games' worth of points in it.

So you'll be playing in humid conditions, you'll play a tiebreaker and then you're getting to that ball change and it's I think 2-1 in the second set, but those first two games of the second set are just the worst. Like, you can't feel the ball, you can't do anything.

But they should probably fix that.

Q. People hit harder now and that nine-game rotation has been around forever probably.

TAYLOR FRITZ: Also just slowing the courts down as well throughout the years. People are hitting the fuzz off the ball a lot more, and you're having longer rallies. It's just, like, the balls just -- depends on the conditions, depends on the ball, but there's way more times than not that it's just, like, the balls are just getting destroyed before. You know, the last, like, two, three games before a ball change, all I'm thinking is just get through these games and get to the ball change.

Q. Tommy was in here before and we asked him about Reilly, if he missed him. He said he's getting a little closer to finally coming back. I want to check your rapport with him. Are you keeping in touch? Do you miss him on tour?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, of course. I feel like there has been some good news the last couple of weeks with Reilly. Like, he's stayed in shape and he's been actually, like, not that far from coming back. It's just a couple of things that have been holding him back. But he's been, like, training and hitting and, like, he's ready to go.

So it's looking like, yeah, looking like there's some good news, and I don't want to, like -- I can't give away too

much. But yeah, we all really miss him. But it's looking positive for him coming back.

Q. There has been a lot of talk this week about one-handers. I know you gave a good answer about the one-hander. Do you ever think two-handers get a bit of a bad rap? Nothing major, but does that ever feel a little bit that two-handers seem to be not as well looked upon than a one-hander in terms of aesthetics because of the looks of it?

TAYLOR FRITZ: Yeah, I'd have a lot more fans if I had a one-hander. People like the way it looks and it is pretty, for sure.

Q. You were commenting on the courts earlier on. Have you found them to be a little bit quicker this year?

TAYLOR FRITZ: I'm not sure. I mean, I know -- I felt this last year, the outside courts, like all the practice courts are way faster than Stadium 1 and 2, for sure. I can't speak to the other courts, because I haven't been on the other courts.

But like center court and Stadium 2 are a lot slower than the practice courts. The practice courts are fast, actually.

Q. Speaking of practice, you were talking about your regimen before. Have you charted out maybe what things are going to look like in a year or two in terms of practice changes? Because we often hear players, as they get older, they practice a little bit less time-wise on the court but they'll change the quality aspect. Have you thought about that going forward?

TAYLOR FRITZ: No, because all that, it just really depends on how I'm feeling and how I'm playing, you know. When my body feels really good and I don't have any issues popping up or little things bothering me, then I'm going to train as much as I have ever trained and do as much as I can. And then maybe I'm coming back from a trip where I've played lots of tennis and I'm going to be home for five days before going to the next tournament, I'm probably going to, like, just chill out and practice more to work on some things, and mainly just maintain my level and my fitness. And if I'm playing bad, then I'm going to spend a lot more time working on things.

It's just adapting based on the kind of situation.

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